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REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING
OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-second year

Letter dated 2 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the transfer of power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo issued on 22 May 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 82 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) N. H. BIEGMAN
Permanent Representative of
the Netherlands
to the United Nations

* A/52/50.

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ANNEX

[Original: English]

Statement on the transfer of power in the Democratic Republic of the Congo issued on 22 May 1997 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union was encouraged by the fact that the change in Government in Kinshasa took place without widespread fighting. In this context it recalls the untiring diplomatic efforts of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and African countries, in particular South Africa, as well as those of the European Union Special Envoy, to find a peaceful solution to the conflict. At the same time, it regrets the loss of life which occurred throughout the conflict.

The European Union expresses the hope that the transitional Government will be as broadly based as possible so as to encompass the political aspirations of all the people of the country. The European Union looks forward to the implementation of President Kabila's commitments to convene a constituent assembly within 60 days and to hold elections within two years. the Union restates its willingness to support the democratization process leading to free and fair elections, which should bring lasting peace, stability and prosperity for all the people of the country.

The transitional Government has the responsibility for promoting reconciliation between all the people of the former Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this regard, respect for human rights and commitment to democracy will be essential.

The Union recalls that the new authorities are responsible for security throughout the country, including the protection and dignified treatment of refugees, large numbers of whom remain in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is important that the humanitarian organizations have full and unrestricted access to them. The Union attaches importance to the implementation of Mr. Kabila's earlier commitments in this regard and urges him to ensure that there is full respect for international humanitarian law, and to ensure the safety of humanitarian aid workers.

The European Union regrets that the investigative mission of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was prevented from visiting the country. It urges the new authorities to allow the United Nations to carry out its work in relation to human rights as a matter of urgency and to guarantee it unhindered access to all the regions it wishes to visit.

It is on this basis, and bearing in mind the huge problems of rehabilitation, as well as of economic and social reconstruction of the country, that the Union hopes to develop its relations with the Democratic Republic of the Congo to help its people pursue their legitimate aspirations.

A Presidency-led mission, including the Commission and the European Union Special Envoy, will convey the Union's views to the new authorities and, in the light of their visit, recommend appropriate next steps, including at the political level, to promote the European Union's objectives in the region.